

New Information appears in red font

JSG intel appears in Italics

1.0 Background Information

JSG is leading response on this issue, including coordination with CBSA and the RCMP to address alternative movements across the border as well as managing the protest, including any enforcement that may be needed to disband the blockade.

The department relies on information that is provided by JSG through corporate channels as well as regional information for the information provided.

The police will determine how and when to apply sanctions under the TSA, the CIDA, and the Criminal Code – and all of those options are being considered.

2.0 Department's Role with Border Interactions or Enforcement

The Department's plays only a supporting role in interactions with border crossing or law enforcement decisions. The department, through our regional Highway Maintenance Contractor, would provide signage and suggest/manage traffic strategies to support the intended actions of law enforcement.

3.0 Current Status

All conditions related to this event are confirmed by the department as follows, at time of reporting:

At 20:30 hrs, February 2, department staff observed about 54 trucks lined up along Highway 4 at Coutts, both directions and a driving lane had been established.

At 17:45 hrs, February 2, a local RCMP requested to the South Region MCI to have the Highway Maintenance Contractor perform a visual inspection of the two lanes (one lane in each direction at the border) in readiness for opening for traffic at Coutts. At 18:00 hrs the inspections indicated lanes were ready to take traffic. *According to JSG, CBSA had not re-opened the border facilities yet*

At 17:31 hrs February 2, RCMP issued a statement communicating, "that the participants in the blockade made the decision to open a lane going northbound and southbound on Highway 4 near the Coutts border." To allow road access for residents, school bussing to resume, emergency services access, and the flow of goods and services across the border.

Strategic traffic checkpoints have been established to re-route southbound traffic away from the Coutts congestion. This also prevents any additional protestors from accessing the main congestion location. RCMP are directing commercial traffic to the other border crossings at Carway on Highway 2, Del Bonita on Highway 62, and Wildhorse on Highway 41.

Sheriffs and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) have been engaged and are at strategic locations for the other border crossings to ensure only legitimate commercial traffic passes through.

RCMP are allowing the HMC and department operations staff through the checkpoints to address highway maintenance and operations needs.

Some traffic has chosen to divert to other border crossings, such as the Del Bonita border crossing 80 kilometres west of Coutts, which saw 250-300 more vehicles, equal 6-7 times more traffic, January 31 and February 1.

The Department and JEI have prepared the following data regarding the border crossing at Coutts:

- The border crossing at Coutts is Alberta's busiest land border crossing.
- *About \$5 billion worth of Alberta exports – or about \$13 million per day on average – were shipped by truck through the Coutts border crossing in 2020. In addition to Alberta products, the border crossing also supports the movement of goods to and from other Canadian jurisdictions.*
- *The protest is holding up several shipments, including beef. This is affecting not only consumers but also truckers, ranchers and farmers, grocery chains and consumers. It could lead to the destruction of spoiled food and higher grocery prices for Albertans.*
- *While some truckers should be able to divert to other border crossings, livestock shipments – a major Alberta agri-food export – will have fewer or higher cost options to divert to other border crossings as Coutts is the only one in Alberta with veterinary services.*
- *The nearest alternative border crossings with veterinary services are located at Eastport-Kingsgate (BC-Idaho) or Regway in Saskatchewan, either of which would entail significant additional costs.*

Department discussion with CBSA and Alberta Washington Office:

- Alberta's Washington Office is engaged with US side and reported this morning that:
 - They will be making the Del Bonita crossing a 24-hour port of entry beginning today.
 - The USDA meat inspector will have trucks hauling meat products coming into Montana through Del Bonita go over to Sweetgrass after clearing the border so they can get the required inspection.
 - All livestock will still have to go through Sweetgrass.
 - The Department is working to confirm if CBSA will mirror extended hours with CBSA officials.

Current Ports of Entry Hour per CBA Website as of Time of Reporting

- CBSA Website currently indicates the following hours of operation:
 - Del Bonita has now extended hours of operation to 9am -10pm, Monday to Friday.
 - Carway has have been extended to 8am – 10 pm, seven days a week.
- Note: There are other land border crossings in the province (6 in total), however CBSA is focusing on accommodating extra traffic at the Del Bonita and Carway crossings, in order to manage their limited resources and recognizing that the United States counterpart at the border also needs to accommodate extended hours.
 - Some traffic may choose to divert to another crossing, but the department should only recommend the two crossings that CBSA have identified as preferred crossings (Del Bonita and Carway).

Communications with AMTA:

- On February 1, RCMP reached out to AMTA to see if there was any opportunity to acquire some tow truck support. AMTA has purposely been quiet for about the last week publicly and will remain neutral. Private tow truck operators may not wish to undertake the work at Coutts for fear of reprisal to their businesses or fear of the situation and their safety.
- AMTA is closely watching protester activity and implications on other routes in/out of Alberta.
- AMTA will be reaching out to their membership to share information on the situation and status of border today.

Calls to Action on Social Media and Planned Protest Activity

February 3, Calgary Herald reporting the morning of February 3 that there is a planned convoy for Calgary this Saturday, February 5, 2022. Organizers state they are willing to work with police to keep emergency lanes open.

At 12:51hrs Feb 2, the department has received social media reports that Operation Bear Hug in Calgary intends to support convoy on Saturday, February 5, instead of February 2.

On February 2, CTV Calgary is reported about "Operation Bear Hug" that is calling for truckers to block major highways in Alberta today. The Reporter says he's heard people are planning to gather at the truck stop on Highway 1 near the Minister's house then park on the highway between Banff/Canmore.

JSG Reported that a group Farmers for Freedom have sent messages via text and other social media asking farmers to lockdown the country and province wide every day until mandates are lifted. Starting on Thursday February 3, 2022, at 12 noon for 3 hours. The ask is for every farmer available to hook up implements and to lockdown of every road.

Southern Region

By 10:00 hrs February 2, the department received reports from the Cochrane RCMP of planned protests for a convoy to blockade the WB lanes of Highway 1 at the Banff Park Gates today from 11 am to 6 pm. Also a report of an event moving to Highway 1 at Bowfort Road in Calgary.

North Central Region and Fort McMurray Region

By 12:00 hrs February 2, the department had received unconfirmed reports of protest activity planned at the following locations:

- Central Region Today (Feb 2) Highway 2 at Olds and Didsbury interchanges;
- Today (Feb 2) Highway 21/Hwy 42 intersection;
- Tomorrow (Feb 3) along Highway 2 from Ponoka to Lacombe from noon to 3pm;

Peace Region

By 12:00 hrs February 2, the department had received unconfirmed reports of planned protest activity around Grande Prairie. The plan for this is to apparently block only one lane, so that people can come and go.

Activity Reports from Across the Province:

Southern Region

February 2:

- At 21:00 hrs and onwards, protesters continued to gather at the Highway 4 and 501S intersection, where there is a RCMP/JSG roadblock in place. (Confirmed).
- At 16:05 hrs, The City of Lethbridge stood up their Emergency Command Centre in anticipation of protest activity related the Farmer 4 Freedom social media postings. [Confirmed]
- At 15:37 hrs, department staff were informed by social media post of a slow rolling convoy in both directions (apparently) eastbound and westbound at Highway 1 and 36. [Unconfirmed]
- At 15:16 hrs, department staff reported a blockade at the Oldman River bridge in both directions on Highway 2 near Fort Macleod (north of Highway 3), with the highway still open in both directions however it was a zig-zag path through the blockade. The Blockade was first reported at 13:58 hrs. [Confirmed]
- At 15:00 hrs department staff reported that on Highway 1 slow rolling at Dunmore (Eagle Butte Road) east of Medicine Hat observed at 13:00 hrs had dissipated. [Confirmed]
- At 14:30 department staff reported a slow rolling convoy on Highway 3 West out of Coaldale. (Confirmed) At 13:30 hrs, department staff informed of slow rolling convoys on Highway 3 heading to meet up at Taber from Coaldale and Grassy Lake. [Unconfirmed]
- At 13:30 hrs, department staff reported slow moving convoys in the area of Fort Macleod on southbound Highway 2. [Confirmed]
- At 13:00 hrs, department field staff witnessed farm equipment and pick-ups with flags heading south of Fort Macleod on Highway 2 towards Standoff, also carrying portable washrooms. [Confirmed]
- At 12:45 hrs a slow rolling convoy on Southbound Highway 2 near Granum (Highway 519). [Confirmed]
- Report of slow rolling traffic and back-ups at Highway 23 & 519 Roundabout, via google traffic and Facebook. [Unconfirmed]
- At 12:00 hrs Highway 1 and Highway 22 intersection between Calgary and Fort Macleod was clear of protesters with RCMP maintaining a presence. Some reports of a few trucks assembling to head to Fort Macleod and convoy at Highway speeds. [Confirmed]
- At 11:30 hrs the department received information indicating that a large number of trucks and other vehicles heading southbound on Highway 2 near Nanton, unknown where they were going and if they were going to join the Fort Macleod group or head farther South. [Unconfirmed]
- The department received social media reports of protest activity on Highway 3 heading toward Crowsnest Pass, consisting of slow rolling large equipment. [Unconfirmed]
- At 11:00 hrs the department had received report of a slow rolling convoy doing loops on Highway 2 at Fort Macleod. [Unconfirmed]

Milk River Blockade

February 2:

- Highway 4 at Highway 501 West remains closed by RCMP/JSG in both directions with an enhanced blockade. This is impeding traffic flow to and from the Coutts border crossing.
[Confirmed]

North Central Region and Fort McMurray Region

No activity reported.

Central Region

No activity reported.

Peace Region

No activity reported.